

Political Reviews

The Region in Review: International Issues and Events, 2018

NIC MACLELLAN

Melanesia in Review: Issues and Events, 2018

VOLKER BOEGE, MATHIAS CHAUCHAT,
JOSEPH DANIEL FOUKONA, BUDI HERNAWAN,
MICHAEL LEACH, JAMES STIEFVATER

The Contemporary Pacific, Volume 31, Number 2, 497–572
© 2019 by University of Hawai'i Press

The year 2018 was a year of anniversaries, celebrating decades of political independence as well as innovative regional institutions.

The University of the South Pacific (USP)—one of the Pacific’s most important regional initiatives—marked its fiftieth anniversary. Over the past five decades, it has grown from a small campus at Laucala Bay in Suva to a multifaceted institution, with the Emalus campus in Vanuatu and a network of extension centers spanning the region. A fiftieth-anniversary history documents how the university has educated generations of Pacific leaders and provided a vital space for debate, reflection, and agitation (Leckie 2018).

Across the Pacific, countries commemorated anniversaries of colonization, independence, or political sovereignty. Forum Island Countries held birthday celebrations, including Nauru (1968), Tuvalu (1978), and Solomon Islands (1978). Australia marked the 230th anniversary of the First Fleet landing on 26 January—a day mourned as Invasion Day by indigenous peoples. With 2018 marking the twentieth anniversary of the 1998 Noumea Accord, the French dependency of New Caledonia held a referendum on self-determination in November. Bougainville also marked the fortieth anniversary of the creation of provincial government in Papua New Guinea (PNG), a key step on the path toward the islands’ looming independence referendum in late 2019.

Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) leaders

met in Nauru in September for their annual meeting. Among a bevy of outcomes (PIFS 2018b), a key statement reframed the regional security discussion. The Boe Declaration looks to an “expanded concept of security inclusive of human security, humanitarian assistance, prioritizing environmental security and regional cooperation in building resilience to disasters and climate change, including through regional cooperation and support” (PIFS 2018a). While covering a diverse range of traditional security issues, an unprecedented provision notes that all leaders “reaffirm that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific and our commitment to progress the implementation of the Paris Agreement” (PIFS 2018a).

The challenge now is for donors and development partners to refocus technical assistance, research, and finance on the existential threat of climate change. This will be difficult at a time when traditional security agendas are driving regional debate, with Western nations mobilizing against Chinese influence in the Pacific.

For Smaller Island States (SIS) like 2018 Forum host Nauru and 2019 host Tuvalu—both with populations of around eleven thousand people—the logistics of these meetings are becoming difficult. There are currently eighteen Forum Dialogue Partners (Canada, the People’s Republic of China, Cuba, the European Union,

France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States). In addition to the partners, the annual meeting is attended by representatives of Forum associate members (Tokelau and newly upgraded Wallis and Futuna) as well as Forum observers (American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Timor-Leste, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations [UN] Secretariat, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, and the World Bank). Add in the media, civil society, and business representatives, and other entities, and a bed for the night is at a premium!

As more global players look to the Islands region for diplomatic advantage, they bring their agendas into the annual Forum meeting. This can crowd out the priorities of Pacific Island countries and clash with local ways of working. The packed program of the meeting, with numerous side events, bilateral consultations, and press conferences, also places pressure on leaders and key Forum staff as they rush from session to session.

After the 2018 SIS meeting in Nauru, SIS leaders formally noted the “increasing complexities of the geopolitical environment as well as the increasing interest of traditional and non-traditional partners in the Blue Pacific and called for the need to be provided the space and time to be able to discuss issues and priorities of shared importance” (PIFS 2018e).

These problems may lead to changes in the structure of the annual

meeting, such as shifting the Forum Dialogue Partners’ session to earlier in the year, alongside the new Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting (this may be resisted by some major powers, who use the occasion to directly influence presidents and prime ministers). In the final Forum communiqué, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) was directed to “work with the Forum Troika (Samoa, Nauru, and Tuvalu) to review the guidelines and format of the Pacific Islands Forum Meetings” and report back to leaders in 2019 (PIFS 2018b).

In another significant but largely unreported decision, Forum leaders also adopted a new schedule of member financial contributions. These extra funds will assist the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to keep pace with its growing agenda but also slowly increase the independence of decision making from donor pressure.

Such pressure was evident throughout the year, as Pacific Rim geopolitics impinged on Island states. It’s a time of significant uncertainty, with US President Donald Trump continuing trade wars with China; the United Kingdom and Commonwealth unsettled by the Brexit debate; and the European Union slowly preparing to negotiate a replacement of the 2000 Cotonou Treaty with African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries. States across Asia—China, Taiwan, Korea, India, and Indonesia—are also providing new pathways for aid, trade, and investment. At the same time, these countries are seeking a diplomatic quid pro quo, from silence on human rights abuses to numbers for UN votes or diplomatic support in northern hemisphere disputes.

In its 2017 *Foreign Policy White Paper*, the Australian Government highlighted the importance of a “rules-based order.” Canberra aims to increase quadrilateral coordination between Australia, the United States, Japan, and India in order to contain China and North Korea, although Canberra denies that containment is the objective of these strategic partnerships (Australian Government 2017). In line with its ANZUS allies, New Zealand issued a new Strategic Defence Policy Statement that highlights the importance of the South Pacific (NZ Ministry of Defence 2018b). Western nations are seeking to limit Chinese investment in key sectors such as transportation and telecommunications (symbolized by the ban on investment by Chinese corporation Huawei in key projects).

At the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in April, Australia lobbied the United Kingdom for renewed activity in the Pacific. Britain announced it will open diplomatic missions in Vanuatu, Tonga, and Sāmoa, replacing a network downgraded in 2005 as the United Kingdom formally withdrew from the Pacific Community (Anders and Cornish 2018).

Japan hosted the eighth in a series of triennial Pacific Area Leaders Meetings (PALM8) in May. The summit with Island leaders was held in Fukushima, the prefecture of Japan’s nuclear meltdown. In the final communiqué, there is no mention of China, but leaders reaffirmed “a maritime order based on the rule of law in the Pacific Ocean,” expressed concern over Korean nuclear proliferation, and supported Japan’s bid for permanent

membership in the UN Security Council (PALM 2018). The meeting also saw the first participation of new Forum members French Polynesia and New Caledonia, despite Japanese concern over their status as non-self-governing territories.

During a May visit to Australia and New Caledonia, French President Emmanuel Macron presented France as a key strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific region, promoting a France-Australia-India axis across both the Indian and Pacific Oceans. This alliance is being used to justify ongoing French colonialism in the South Pacific and to maintain control of New Caledonia. French media noted that “given the new strategic ambition, Noumea is the bridgehead for France in its axis with New Delhi and Canberra, through which it hopes to block Chinese expansion in the Pacific” (Hacquemond 2018).

Like the ANZUS allies, however, France is caught between its economic ties with China and its security agenda. During his visit, President Macron welcomed China’s engagement with world markets but stressed that the Xi Jinping government must operate within the trade and security regime established by the Western allies: “What’s important is to preserve a rule-based development in the region and especially in the Indo-Pacific region. It’s to preserve the necessary balances in the region” (Macron 2018).

Some Island governments are wary of the new Indo-Pacific framework, seeing this as a Western perspective that downplays the Forum’s Blue Pacific agenda (Maclellan 2018c). Samoan Prime Minister Tuilaepa

Sailele Malielegaoi noted: “The renewed vigor with which a ‘Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy’ is being advocated and pursued leaves us with much uncertainty. For the Pacific, there is a real risk of privileging ‘Indo’ over the ‘Pacific’” (Malielegaoi 2018, 6).

The call for renewed Australian and New Zealand engagement in the Pacific is often framed as a policy of strategic denial, the goal being to ensure that Island states do not provide military access to other powers. Conservative think tanks and media decry Chinese “debt diplomacy” that might be used to leverage strategic advantage and establish military bases in the Islands (MacLellan 2018h). Colonel Greg Colton of the Lowy Institute’s South Pacific Fragile States Project (funded by the Australian Department of Defence) argued that Australia should bind Smaller Island States to ANZUS by creating compacts of free association with Nauru, Tuvalu, and Kiribati—a neocolonial vision that swims against current diplomatic trends (Colton 2018).

In April and May, a series of articles in the *Sydney Morning Herald* raised concern about potential Chinese military bases in Vanuatu and French Polynesia, citing unnamed intelligence sources (Wroe 2018a, 2018b, 2018c, 2018d). The suggestion that the governments of Vanuatu and China had been discussing a military facility in Luganville was quickly denied by Vanuatu Foreign Minister Ralph Regenvanu (MacLellan 2018i).

Other Island nations with diplomatic ties to Beijing were critical of the patronizing tone emanating from Canberra and Washington DC, with

Sāmoa’s prime minister stating: “The friendly relations we have with some partners are construed by others as compromising and obtrusive, prompting some to speak up for us to ward off the influences we are supposedly too naive to recognize. By the same token, we are given alternatives that reflect interests beyond altruism and conversion of the poor” (Malielegaoi 2018, 9).

This debate was played out as Taiwan sought to protect its Pacific partnerships against expanding Chinese diplomacy. In the early 1990s, thirty countries recognized Taipei over Beijing, but today this number has nearly halved. Internationally, most of the seventeen nations that recognize Taiwan are Smaller Island States, including six in the Pacific (Nauru, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands, Palau, and Kiribati).

Taiwan is using its relationship with Pacific Island countries to lobby for UN membership. In September, Nauru, Tuvalu, and Palau used similar wording in their annual speeches at the UN General Assembly, calling on the United Nations to “seek a solution to include Taiwan in all its processes, including the International Civil Aviation Organization and the World Health Organization” (see also Remengesau 2018; Waqa 2018; Sopoaga 2018).

Because Taiwan is not a Forum Dialogue Partner, it meets with its six Island allies on the sidelines of the annual summit. However, in 2018, Taiwan provided financial support to Nauru for the Forum meeting. Ironically, although the Taiwanese government was not in the room, the summit was held in a convention center

funded by Taipei, and the Forum sessions took place on the same floor as the Republic of China's embassy.

Not content with placing restrictions on media attending the summit, the host government delayed visas for China's official delegation until the last minute, arguing that the Chinese delegation must travel on personal rather than diplomatic passports (Maclellan 2018a). This brinkmanship brought a sharp rebuke from outgoing Forum chair Malielegaoi and expressions of concern from Forum countries aligned with Beijing.

In response, Chinese diplomats made their concern clear. In an unprecedented display, one Chinese diplomat demanded to speak out of turn during the Forum Dialogue session. In front of regional leaders and the eighteen dialogue partners, he then disputed the ruling to wait his turn from Nauru President Baron Divavesi Waqa as chair of the session and loudly disrupted the meeting, walking out of the room.

This clumsy and arrogant message angered many Pacific leaders and officials—even those aligned with China. Waqa later threatened to denounce China before other international meetings, causing anxiety for Forum staff as to whether he would speak as Forum chair or as the president of his own nation. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat walks a tightrope between members aligned with Beijing and those aligned with Taipei: both China and Taiwan provide an annual grant to the secretariat, with Taiwan's funds often allocated toward Forum support for its SIS members. The China-Taiwan dispute will continue into 2019, as Tuvalu—

aligned with Taiwan—hosts the next leaders' meeting.

This ongoing jousting is clearly frustrating Forum Secretary-General Dame Meg Taylor: "This constant to-ing and fro-ing about Taiwan and China is a constant distraction. I think that there will be a discussion at the leaders meeting on this, in terms of how development partners are treated across the board. . . . The issue that I would like to see is that the Pacific Islands Forum can protect this space for discussion of the issues that are important to the leaders of the Pacific, raised by the Pacific countries" (Maclellan 2018a).

Despite the Forum dispute, China expanded its regional diplomacy during 2018—even in the face of pushback from the ANZUS allies. A highlight was President Xi Jinping's official state visit to Papua New Guinea, which included participation in the November Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit hosted by PNG Prime Minister Peter O'Neill. The summit provided President Xi with a key opportunity to bolster its regional relationships, with the Chinese leader holding a pre-APEC summit with Pacific leaders in Port Moresby. The PNG capital was covered with Chinese flags to mark the arrival of the Chinese president. In contrast, the decision by US President Donald Trump to miss the meeting symbolized US disinterest in multilateral organizations that it cannot control.

With a massive security presence that was assisted by Australia and New Zealand, the O'Neill government hoped the summit would raise Papua New Guinea's profile as a place for

investment in its oil, gas, and mining sectors. There was, however, widespread public debate over the costs of the summit and possible benefits for PNG citizens (symbolized by criticism of the purchase of Maserati and Bentley vehicles to chauffeur the APEC leaders around Port Moresby).

In an attempt to blunt China's role, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States announced an ambitious program to support infrastructure and electrification in Papua New Guinea. With Vice President Mike Pence leading the US delegation, there were sharp diplomatic exchanges with Beijing before and during the summit. In an unprecedented failure, the summit was unable to release a final communiqué, with US and Chinese diplomats deadlocked over language on trade, intellectual property, and other issues.

Despite significant exports of energy, food, and minerals to China, Australia's conservative coalition government has increasingly lined up with the US government, expressing concern over Chinese interference domestically and in the Pacific Islands.

In the face of expanding Chinese trade, loans, and soft power, then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced at the 2016 Forum leaders' meeting that Australia would "step up" in the region (Australian Government 2018). In November 2018, his successor, Scott Morrison, announced a series of measures to implement this renewed commitment.

Australia will establish embassies in all countries and territories that currently lack a diplomatic mission (Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, French Polynesia, Niue,

and the Cook Islands). As well as a regional army training force and new police training and financing, the government will also establish a new Office of the Pacific in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The new office is supposed to enhance whole-of-government coordination, seconding staff from the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Defence, the Department of Home Affairs, and the Attorney-General's Department. The initial lack of staff seconded from departments related to the environment raises concern that the new office, staffed with extra spies and soldiers, will be more focused on Australia's national security than on the human security agenda expressed in the Boe Declaration.

In contrast to Canberra's policies, neighbors like New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Samoa, and Vanuatu are all engaging with President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative. Through this global infrastructure program, China will use loans, grants, and investments from Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Exim Bank, and private corporations to boost regional infrastructure.

In response, at the November APEC summit, Australia joined Japan and the United States in a Trilateral Partnership for Infrastructure Investment in the Indo-Pacific. Australia's Export Finance and Insurance Corporation, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, and the US Overseas Private Investment Corporation will work together to mobilize private-sector funding for infrastructure and energy projects across the Indo-Pacific region.

The Morrison government also

plans to commit A\$2 billion (A\$1 million = US\$716,000) to an Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific, with A\$1.5 billion in loans and A\$500 million in grants. Morrison also committed a further A\$1 billion for the Export Finance and Insurance Corporation to create “a new more flexible infrastructure financing power to support investments in the region which have a broad national benefit for Australia” (Morrison 2018).

The government also extended access to Australia’s Seasonal Worker Program and its Pacific Labor Scheme. Between 2012 and 2017, the Seasonal Worker Program involved 17,320 Pacific Islanders and delivered approximately A\$144 million in net income gains to the region. In February, the World Bank released a report on possible reforms to extend and enhance the scheme (World Bank 2018).

Labor mobility presents a major opportunity for remittance flows to most Forum Island Countries. But the development gains from labor mobility are subject to the unilateral decisions of Australia and New Zealand. The 2017 Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER)-Plus trade agreement only includes legally binding commitments on labor market access for skilled and professional workers. A separate arrangement on labor mobility covers lower-skilled workers, with no legally binding commitments for labor market access (Kautoke-Holani 2018). The only commitment relating to market access liberalization is the establishment of a Pacific Labor Mobility Annual Meeting. The second of these meetings was hosted in Solomon Islands in October.

During the year, there were ongoing

debates about potential costs from the PACER-Plus trade agreement. A report by the Australian Joint Standing Committee on Treaties noted: “The absence of Papua New Guinea and Fiji from PACER-Plus significantly diminishes the utility of the agreement for Australian business” (JSCT 2018, para 3.21). The committee found that “Pacific Island nations already have tariff free access to Australia and New Zealand for their exports, so all tariff reductions and consequent market access benefits will flow to Australia and New Zealand” (JSCT 2018, para 3.26).

Before further Australian initiatives can be rolled out, there will likely be a new government in Canberra, with elections held on 18 May 2019. Opinion polling suggests that the opposition Australian Labor Party (ALP) will win government. In a keynote foreign policy speech in October, ALP leader Bill Shorten stated: “A Labor Government will put the Pacific front and center in our regional foreign policy. We’re not going to forfeit the Pacific because we didn’t turn up. Labor will reconstitute the role of Minister for Pacific Affairs and International Development that the new Prime Minister has recently relegated to Assistant Minister status” (Shorten 2018).

After Prime Minister Morrison failed to attend the 2018 Forum leaders’ meeting, he made a flying visit to Vanuatu and Fiji in January 2019. But Australia’s desire to be seen as the partner of choice in the Pacific is undercut by successive governments’ weak targets on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Island nations also oppose Australia’s plans to expand coal exports to Asia. Frequent paternalist statements by senior politicians

have angered many Pacific citizens. Morrison described the Pacific as “our patch” (Morrison 2018), while in August, Environment Minister Melissa Price met former Kiribati President Anote Tong in Canberra and reportedly told the climate champion: “I know why you’re here. It’s for the cash. For the Pacific, it’s all about the cash. I have my cheque book here, how much do you want?” (Murphy 2018).

Islands Business magazine editorialized: “The Pacific people are not beggars. By her comments, Price has implied that the region is lined up at the doors to Australia’s Treasury, cap in hand, waiting for freebies. Nothing could be further from the truth. . . . The region does not want handouts from Australia. What we want is a reduction in carbon emissions so that global warming is reduced and the Pacific can fight climate change. What we want is Australia’s support in the battle against global warming through a reduction in the sale of coal and the eventual closure of its mines” (*Islands Business* 2018).

As a matter of global justice, however, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development member countries like Australia and the United States have an obligation to contribute increased climate finance through bilateral programs and multilateral mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund (GCF). With the exception of large nations like Papua New Guinea and Fiji, many Pacific Island countries receive limited amounts of foreign direct investment. For this reason, they rely on overseas public finance to complement local taxation and import duties that will

now be wound down under PACER-Plus.

Despite their pledges of commitment to the region in 2018, both the Trump administration and the Morrison government refused to allocate new funding for the Green Climate Fund beyond amounts already paid by previous governments. With elections looming, the Australian Labor Party’s Shadow Foreign Minister Penny Wong pledged that an incoming Labor government would join New Zealand’s government to increase overseas aid and climate finance, stressing that “you can’t have a Pacific policy if you don’t have a climate change policy” (Wong 2018).

The NZ coalition government led by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has already moved to “reset” policy toward the Pacific Islands. Ardern used a February foreign policy address to state that in the Pacific “we can do better, and we will” (2018). Climate action is a key element of this policy shift, with the release of a paper in May on Pacific climate change–related displacement and migration (NZ Government 2018b). Later in the year, the New Zealand Defence Force launched a new report on how climate change will affect defense readiness (NZ Ministry of Defence 2018a).

At their pre-Forum caucus in September, SIS leaders called on “members of the international community to urgently accelerate the achievements of greenhouse gas reductions to limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius” and “for the urgent resolution and adoption of the rule book of the Paris Agreement” (PIFS 2018e). In an unprecedented gesture, all Forum member countries

(with one exception) then endorsed rather than simply noted these SIS outcomes. At the final press conference, Tuvalu Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga declined to name the country expressing qualifications over the need for urgent action on emissions, but he did acknowledge that it begins with a capital A. In the resulting laughter, everyone recognized that this did not mean Aotearoa but rather the largest Forum member (Maclellan 2018g).

Despite the reactionary climate policies emanating from Canberra and Washington DC, and the limited emissions reduction targets negotiated at global climate conferences, Pacific communities are getting on with the job.

The damage caused by cyclones and other disasters is seen as a key economic issue in the region. The 2018 Forum Economic Ministers' Meeting debated two proposals to risk-proof infrastructural assets. The first is a Pacific Resilience Facility, designed as a regional fund to help Pacific governments, private sector businesses, and communities to invest in resilience initiatives. The second is a Pacific Island Countries' Climate Change Insurance Facility, intended especially for Smaller Island States that cannot afford the expensive insurance premiums required to protect public infrastructure from extreme weather events.

As part of its Talanoa program on climate change throughout 2018—an international series of informal discussions on climate solutions—Fiji hosted the Suva Expert Dialogue on Loss and Damage Associated with Climate Change Impacts in May (Government of Fiji 2018). New Zealand and some Pacific states also joined the Powering

Past Coal Alliance, looking to reduce fossil fuel subsidies for new coal and gas exploration. Internationally, Sāmoa and New Zealand joined other mid-level nations to form Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform (MFAT 2018).

Throughout 2018, Forum Island Countries maintained a strong and successful focus on accessing and managing climate finance. Over the last five years, Island nations have been using the Pacific Islands Climate Finance Assessment Framework to determine their resource needs and develop efficient ways to manage large inflows of finance. Despite ongoing problems with accessing global funding mechanisms, this work on the ground has led to positive results.

The Cook Islands has successfully applied for status as an accredited National Implementing Entity for both the Global Climate Fund and the Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund, becoming the only Pacific country to obtain direct-access funding. Sāmoa has become the most successful country in accessing bilateral and multilateral climate finance, and Tonga won approval for its first tranche of GCF funding in 2018. There is a major focus on public finance management, with Kiribati and Solomon Islands establishing new climate finance units within their ministries of finance (PIFS 2018c).

At year's end, Pacific governments traveled to Katowice, Poland, for the twenty-fourth Conference of the Parties (COP24) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. A key outcome was the adoption of a rulebook to implement the Paris Agreement on Climate Change,

although there was limited progress in reducing emissions, with most countries refusing to announce new, stronger targets.

On 8 October, just before COP24, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a long-awaited special report titled “Global Warming of 1.5°C.” The scientific report detailed the effects of a temperature rise of 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, stressing that the achievement of this target is possible but would require “deep emissions reductions” and “rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society” (IPCC 2018, 6). The report stressed the particular dangers for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries that are more vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

Fiji Ambassador to Brussels Deo Saran noted the achievements for the Pacific as his country ended its year-long presidency of COP23: “Our voice is getting stronger and our influence is growing. Built on recent years of hard work, the very fact that a Pacific island nation, a Small Island Developing State and a climate-vulnerable state held the presidency gave us all an opportunity we never had before. Finally, after 25 years, the Pacific islands were at the very forefront of the discussions. The risks we face were laid bare as never before. The focus on limiting warming to 1.5 degrees was unprecedented” (*Fiji Sun* 2018).

These advances, however, are undercut by the actions of the Trump administration, with its ongoing decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement and its refusal to commit the remaining US\$2 billion of the

Obama administration’s US\$3 billion pledge to the Global Climate Fund.

The United States tried to show its commitment to the Islands by sending a large delegation to the Nauru Forum, led by Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke. However, in the Trump administration, Zinke has worked to promote fossil fuels and roll back US federal environmental regulations. Rather than just attend the Forum Dialogue meeting with other Forum Dialogue Partners, the United States lobbied to host a separate breakfast with Forum leaders. This power play did not work. The final communiqué states that “leaders of Forum Island Countries called on the United States to return to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change” (PIFS 2018b).

During his September tour of the region, Zinke visited the US territory of Guam to meet outgoing Governor Eddie Calvo. Within weeks, however, the Interior secretary announced that he would stand down from the Trump cabinet following a series of allegations of impropriety and conflict of interest.

Zinke’s resignation was one of many from the Trump administration as the US Democrats took control of the House of Representatives in November’s midterm elections. Guam elected Democrat Michael San Nicolas as its nonvoting delegate in the US Congress, while Republican Eddie Baza Calvo stepped down as governor of Guam and was replaced by Democrat Lou Leon Guerrero, the island’s first female governor.

From the start of 2018, many people were jangled by US–North Korea sabre rattling (including a false alert of a nuclear attack on Hawai‘i on

13 January, which panicked citizens and highlighted the danger of inadvertent nuclear conflict). The Trump administration's funding for new nuclear weapons clashed with the current mood among New Zealanders and many Island nations, who seek to address the radioactive contamination from Cold War nuclear weapons testing. There is also concern about the ongoing hazard of unexploded ordnance and toxic leakage from vessels sunk during the US advance across the Pacific in World War II (PIFS 2011).

At regional meetings, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) President Hilda Heine highlighted the leakage of nuclear contaminants from the Runit Dome on Enewetak Atoll (ABC 2017). The connection between sea-level rise and nuclear contamination on Runit was vividly portrayed in "Anointed," a 2018 poem by Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner. At their meeting in September, SIS leaders agreed that the issue of radioactive contaminants will be a stand-alone agenda item during future meetings.

In a stunning statement to the French Polynesian Assembly in November, President Edouard Fritch admitted that successive governments led by Gaston Flosse had lied about the health and environmental effects of thirty years of French nuclear testing: "For 30 years we lied to people that these tests were clean. It was us who lied and I was a member of this gang! And for what reason did we lie? Because our own leader had seen a bomb explode" (Zweifel 2018).

These nuclear threats have led to an important response from many Forum countries: the signing or ratification of the new Treaty on the Prohibi-

tion of Nuclear Weapons. The treaty includes unprecedented provisions on assistance for the survivors of nuclear testing, a key concern for countries like Australia, Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and French Polynesia that suffered more than three hundred nuclear tests during the Cold War.

Pacific nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and governments played a crucial role in negotiating the treaty (Bolton 2018). On 3 May, Palau became the first Pacific country to ratify it, followed by New Zealand (31 July), Cook Islands (accession on 4 September), Sāmoa (26 September), and Vanuatu (26 September). The 2018 Forum communiqué formally welcomed these ratifications, even though Australia has long opposed the treaty and refuses to sign it (PIFS 2018b).

Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu, and Timor-Leste have already signed the treaty and are considering ratification, with other Island states pledging to follow. From nuclear-free Vanuatu, Prime Minister Charlot Salwai expressed solidarity: "The small island states of the Pacific—notably our brothers and sisters in the states of Micronesia—continue to be exposed to ongoing threat arising from radioactive contamination, alongside unexploded ordnance [*sic*] and relics of the Second World War. Therefore we call on all states to join us to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons" (Salwai 2018).

At the invitation of NZ Prime Minister Ardern, twelve government delegations from around the region came together in Auckland from 5 to 7 December to take stock of the treaty

from a regional perspective. With US Compact of Free Association states the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands concerned about their legal capacity to sign the treaty (IHRC 2018), the meeting assessed the treaty's prospects for advancing nuclear disarmament and global security and how to work toward its entry into force (NZ Government 2018a).

This collective diplomacy for nuclear disarmament comes at a time of growing tensions between the United States and China. However, Pacific Island governments are increasingly forging their own diplomatic paths, with RMI President Heine noting: "We welcome engagement with the world's largest powers—but they must have our best island interests at heart" (Heine 2018). The new Pacific diplomacy led many governments to look to other international mechanisms to advance their agendas, from the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and China, and the Alliance of Small Island States to a range of UN institutions.

There is a particular focus on UN reform, as RMI President Heine explained: "Small nations can have a unique role within the multilateral system. We would not have the UN Law of the Sea or the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and a great many other outcomes—but for the political will of Small Island Developing States. We are a quarter of this body's membership" (Heine 2018).

The theme of the September 2018 session of the seventy-third UN General Assembly was "making the United Nations relevant to all people." UN Secretary-General António Guterres

has announced an ambitious program of reform of the UN development system in order to achieve the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This review is an opportunity seized by Small Island Developing States, which are often disadvantaged by the United Nations' notoriously bureaucratic and top-heavy structure.

Throughout 2018, the Pacific Islands Forum and individual governments sought to advance the region's Blue Pacific agenda on climate, oceans, and resource management. Tuvalu Prime Minister Sopoaga argued: "We believe that all UN Agencies should identify and develop special programs for SIDS" (Sopoaga 2018, 5).

Meeting the UN secretary-general on 28 September in New York, Forum leaders took their wish list directly to the top. Forum leaders have proposed changes to the UN Security Council agenda, improved UN representation in the Pacific, and better liaison with the UN agencies based in Geneva.

Pacific governments have long argued that the UN Security Council needs reform in order to look beyond traditional state-centered security priorities. In line with the Boe Declaration, the leaders called on the UN secretary-general to appoint a special adviser on climate change and security in order to strengthen the global focus on climate change as a security risk. FSM President Peter Christian said: "We find it deeply troubling that the threat posed by climate change to our existence has not received the Security Council's serious consideration" (2018). Solomon Islands Prime Minister Rick Houenipwela also argued that Small Island Developing States

must have a direct voice on the UN Security Council through a dedicated seat in the non-permanent rotation (Houenipwela 2018, 11).

During their meeting, Island leaders presented Guterres with the first Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report, highlighting progress on meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. They called for UN headquarters support for the upcoming midterm review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway (the framework on sustainable development adopted at the third global SIDS summit, held in Sāmoa in 2016).

As part of the current UN review, the UN Secretariat will study the role of multicountry offices. With the United Nations' multicountry representation in Suva, Apia, and Port Moresby, there is no full-time resident representative in many Smaller Island States, particularly in the northern Pacific. Pacific leaders called for a strengthened role for UN country teams and improvements to the resident coordinator system, along with setting up UN permanent offices across the region.

RMI President Heine told the UN General Assembly: "Our present UN Resident Coordinator is not a resident at all, and faces an impossible task to effectively serve 10 remote nations at once. I look forward to the upcoming review of the UN's multi-country offices, mandated in resolution 72/279, and urge innovate solutions" (Heine 2018, 2).

Pacific governments also moved to strengthen their representation with UN agencies in Geneva. Twenty years

ago, the Forum established a "Permanent Delegation of the Pacific Islands Forum to the World Trade Organization." In May 2018, Mere Falemaka, the PIF permanent representative to the World Trade Organization, was credentialed to expand her role in Geneva. Through her appointment as observer to the UN Office in Geneva, Falemaka's role will now extend to incorporate all UN agencies and other international organizations in the Swiss city.

With Fiji's former UN Ambassador Peter Thomson serving as the UN special envoy for the ocean, Pacific governments are also advancing their agenda under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

As a priority, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) have been working with national governments to negotiate solutions to maritime boundary disputes. At the 2018 Forum, PIF Secretary-General Taylor noted: "Out of the 47 boundaries that need to be settled, we have completed 33. We've been having conversations directly with leaders about the outstanding maritime boundaries that need to be brought to conclusion, so we can have greater ownership of our region" (Maclellan 2018e). With Paris finally agreeing to start negotiations, there has been some progress in the long-deadlocked conflict between France and Vanuatu over Umaenupne (Matthew) and Umaeneag (Hunter) islands, whose sovereignty have been disputed since Vanuatu's independence.

Regional fisheries management can only work if it extends beyond

existing Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). For this reason, Pacific diplomats participated in the first intergovernmental conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea concerning areas of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. This change to the convention is designed to stop illegal activities in the many pockets of high seas located between national zones and to assist the conservation of marine diversity in these areas.

Fiji and Sweden cohosted the first UN Oceans Conference in 2017, and Portugal will host the next global conference in 2020. In preparation, Palau will host the Our Oceans 2020 Conference, with President Tommy Remengesau noting: “We need to identify our priorities and catalyze new coalitions so that the year 2020 comes to be remembered as a year of action” (Remengesau 2018, 3). With support from a dozen countries and UN Special Envoy Thomson, Palau and Norway launched the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy.

In March 2018, the eight Pacific leaders of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) met in the Marshall Islands, the first PNA leaders’ summit since 2010. The summit celebrated a number of achievements, such as the renewal of Marine Stewardship Council certification for free-school skipjack and yellowfin purse seine fisheries. Leaders noted the increase in revenues through improvements to the Vessel Day Scheme, scientific research on tuna stocks, and better monitoring of illegal, unreported,

and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Given this agenda, the PNA is expanding staffing and has contracted for a new office to be built in Majuro.

PNA leaders agreed to pursue legal recognition of the defined maritime baselines established under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. They want these data points that establish the boundaries of current Exclusive Economic Zones to remain in perpetuity, regardless of the impacts of sea-level rise. PNA CEO Ludwig Kumoru noted: “We want to make sure that even if their land disappears that they don’t lose their EEZ. . . . We want to make sure that the boundaries are protected today so in years to come even if people migrate somewhere else that is still their EEZ and they still have licenses and support their people where ever they are going to be” (Ligaiula 2018).

Island leaders also launched a regional initiative for an IUU-free Pacific in order to eradicate illegal fishing from the region, with RMI President Heine noting: “Enhanced efforts on illegal fishing are needed by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, and we should not be afraid to name and shame the worst offenders” (Heine 2018, 3).

A key change in regional leadership came at the Forum Fisheries Ministers Meeting in the Cook Islands in July with the retirement of James Movick, director-general of the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). His replacement is Dr Manumatavai Tupou-Roosen of Tonga, who previously served as FFA legal counsel (Volau 2018). Forum Secretary-General Taylor welcomed the unanimous decision of Pacific gov-

ernments to appoint the first woman to lead the agency: “I am very proud that a daughter of the Blue Pacific has been appointed Director General. . . . I have to say that I am also extremely proud of the fact that another woman is sitting in a key leadership position within the region” (PIFS 2018d).

At the Forum in September, Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne and Cook Islands Prime Minister Henry Puna unveiled one of two new aircraft for aerial surveillance of Pacific maritime zones, funded by Australia’s Pacific Maritime Surveillance Program. To support real-time monitoring of maritime threats, Payne also announced funding for a A\$17.7 million Pacific Fusion Centre, “to share information in relation to threats, in relation to operational activities of their own law enforcement agencies or their patrol activities. So we are working as closely together as possible to identify and defeat these criminal challenges” (MacLellan 2018b).

In December, PNA and FFA representatives lobbied hard at the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) annual meeting. The Pacific representatives worked to resist pressure from the United States to increase its quota for bigeye tuna (AFP 2018), and they sought expanded participation for Small Island Developing States in the work of the commission.

Increasing numbers of Islanders are currently working in the local and regional fishing industry, with nearly twenty-three thousand employees across the region. As well as crew on fishing vessels, eight hundred fisheries observers aboard purse seiners, and other maritime workers, there

are fifteen thousand tuna processing jobs in fish canning factories, providing employment for many women. For the first time, the WCPFC adopted minimum labor standards for crew on fishing vessels, with PNA CEO Kumoru stating: “We are promoting action in support of human rights for fishers working in our fishery and that go to addressing concerns about trafficking in people and other illicit activities” (PNA 2018).

Beyond the Blue Pacific agenda, a central regional concern was resource management. Alongside long-standing investment in Papua New Guinea’s Ramu nickel project, Chinese state-owned and private companies have undertaken new projects in 2018. Tahiti Nui Océan Foods, a subsidiary of the Tianrui Group Co Ltd, will invest US\$300 million in an aquaculture project on Hao Atoll in French Polynesia, which hosts a long airstrip and infrastructure previously used as a staging post for French nuclear testing. New Caledonia’s Société Minière du Sud Pacifique (SMSP) mining company and Northern Province development arm, Sofinor, hold a 51 percent ownership of a joint venture with Yangzhou Yichuan Nickel Industry Co Ltd. In March, SMSP agreed to deliver 600,000 tonnes of nickel ore to Yichuan each year for the next twenty-five years after the Chinese corporation agrees to sell 51 percent of its share capital to SMSP (MacLellan forthcoming).

In the lead-up to the November APEC summit, Chinese businessmen also approached John Momis, president of the Autonomous Bougainville Government, to invest in the giant Panguna gold and copper mine, previ-

ously operated by Bougainville Copper Ltd (Matsumoto 2018). Papua New Guinea's National Research Institute published research fiscal alternatives for Bougainville, complemented by NGO research on alternatives to mining through promotion of permaculture and agricultural exports (NRI 2018; Jubilee 2018).

There is growing pressure from French and US corporations to advance the deep-sea mining agenda, as well as growing interest in deep-sea mining from the China Ocean Mineral Resources Research and Development Association (Zhang 2018). Nautilus Minerals has long planned to mine seabed minerals beneath Papua New Guinea's Bismarck Sea. However, with community resistance, falling share prices, and the apparent loss of a specialized support vessel, Nautilus has pushed out commencement of mining beyond 2019 (*Economist* 2018).

Governments in the region also pledged their support for human rights, with Fiji taking up a position on the UN Human Rights Council in 2018 with former Fiji High Court Judge Nazhat Shameem appointed as vice president of the council. The RMI government announced its intention to bid for a seat on the Human Rights Council from 2020 (Heine 2018).

With nongovernmental organizations actively debating the costs and benefits of government policy, they often found that politicians and officials were wary of media coverage that might limit investment in resource projects or expose corruption or mismanagement. Throughout the year, there was renewed debate over the uses and abuses of social media,

issues of government transparency, and media rights and responsibilities.

Despite official public commitment to accountability, there were worrying incidents of harassment of journalists across the region, including the assault of journalists in Papua New Guinea, changes to the role and position of key journalists at the Tonga Broadcasting Commission, and the reintroduction of libel laws in Sāmoa (MacLellan 2018f).

In February, editor Samisoni Pareti of *Islands Business* magazine, journalist Nanise Volau, and former publisher Netani Rika were questioned by police following publication of an article about judicial rulings on a long-running industrial dispute. Police seized phones and computers and recommended that the journalists face serious charges under Fiji's Public Order Act (*Fiji Times* 2018), although prosecutors later declined to proceed. In May, a Fiji court acquitted four people charged with sedition and other serious offenses after the 2016 publication of a malicious letter in the Fijian-language newspaper *Nai Lalakai*, part of the Fiji Times group (MacLellan 2018f).

In recent years, Nauru and Australia have used a nonrefundable visa application fee of US\$5,000 for journalists seeking to visit Nauru. In line with standard practice, Nauru waived this visa fee for accredited journalists at the September Forum. However, it limited the number of media workers who could attend, banned reporters from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and introduced unprecedented restrictions on the stories journalists could cover outside the formal Forum agenda. Television New

Zealand journalist Barbara Dreaver was briefly detained by police after talking with a refugee (Maclellan 2018d).

Given the limited opportunities for dissent and dialogue through traditional media and information channels, social media has enabled activists to exert pressure on policymakers from the bottom up. Some politicians are angered by popular use of social media to challenge (or defame) them, with an unsuccessful proposal from PNG politician Sam Basil to suspend Facebook's operations in Papua New Guinea and the introduction of Fiji's Online Safety Act 2018 (Kant and others 2018; Tarai 2018).

The core human right—the right to self-determination—was also on the regional agenda. Under the twenty-year transition established by the 1998 Noumea Accord, the French dependency of New Caledonia held its referendum on self-determination on 4 November. In an unprecedented turnout, 56.67 percent of voters decided to remain within the French Republic, while 43.33 percent voted for independence.

These figures, with a clear majority opposing full sovereignty, suggest a setback for New Caledonia's independence coalition, Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste (FLNKS). In reality, the size of the pro-independence vote has disheartened partisans of the French Republic. Just days after the referendum, FLNKS spokesperson Daniel Goa stated: "We lost on the numbers, but for us it's a victory. For the Kanak people, the first people, this is a great victory, as we have loudly and clearly expressed our perspective without ambiguity and without

recourse. Who now will contest the justice of our struggle, who now will challenge our very existence?" (Maclellan 2019).

The likely balance of forces after the next Provincial Assembly and Congressional elections in May 2019 will open the way for a second referendum in 2020, which can be called by a third of the members of the new Congress. A late 2020 vote will come soon after Bougainville's referendum on self-determination, which is scheduled to be held during the twelve months following June 2019.

The synergy of two referenda in close proximity—along with ongoing agitation for independence in West Papua—will pose significant problems for the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) and the Pacific Islands Forum, given opposition to independence in Port Moresby and Canberra (Maclellan and Regan 2018). Throughout the year, Indonesian forces continued human rights abuses in West Papua, while the Vanuatu government pledged to take a resolution to the UN General Assembly in 2019 seeking re-inscription for West Papua on the UN list of non-self-governing territories.

There was international monitoring of New Caledonia's referendum campaign and polling day, with the United Nations sending a team of thirteen electoral experts; a Forum ministerial mission with representatives from Nauru, Vanuatu, and Sāmoa; and a support team from the Melanesian Spearhead Group, led by MSG Director-General Ambassador Amena Yauvoli. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat also continued its tradition of sending monitoring missions for parliamentary elections around the region, including

French Polynesia in May and Cook Islands in June. India, Indonesia, and Australia led a Multinational Observation Group for the November elections in Fiji.

NIC MACLELLAN

References

All websites accessed 5 April 2019.

ABC, Australian Broadcasting Corporation. 2017. *The Dome*. ABC TV, 27 November. <http://www.abc.net.au/foreign/the-dome/9198340>

AFP, Agence France Presse. 2018. Pacific Nations Resist US Push to Lift Tuna Quota. 11 December.

Anders, Molly, and Lisa Cornish. 2018. UK to Boost Pacific Aid after Australia Request. Devex, 26 April. <https://www.devex.com/news/uk-to-boost-pacific-aid-after-australia-request-92612>

Ardern, Jacinda. 2018. Speech by Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of Aotearoa / New Zealand. 73rd session, UN General Assembly, New York, 27 September.

Australian Government. 2017. *Foreign Policy White Paper*. November. Canberra: Government of Australia. <https://www.fpwhitepaper.gov.au/>

———. 2018. Stepping-Up Australia's Pacific Engagement. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Fact Sheet. Canberra: Government of Australia. <https://dfat.gov.au/geo/pacific/engagement/Pages/stepping-up-australias-pacific-engagement.aspx>

Bolton, Matthew. 2018. The "Pacific" Part of "Asia-Pacific": Oceanic Diplomacy in the 2017 Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. *Asian Journal of Political Science* 26 (3): 371–389. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02185377.2018.1515641>

Christian, Peter. 2018. Speech by Peter Christian, President of the Federated States of Micronesia. 73rd session, UN General Assembly, New York, 27 September.

Colton, Greg. 2018. Safeguarding Australia's Security Interests through Closer Pacific Ties. Lowy Institute, 4 April. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/stronger-together-safeguarding-australia-s-security-interests-through-closer-pacific-o>

Economist. 2018. Deep Trouble: A High-Profile Deep-Sea Mining Company Is Struggling. 6 December. <https://www.economist.com/business/2018/12/06/a-high-profile-deep-sea-mining-company-is-struggling>

Fiji Sun. 2018. Pacific Voice "Stronger Than Ever." 20 December. <http://fijisun.com.fj/2018/12/20/pacific-voice-stronger-than-ever/>

Fiji Times. 2018. Police Question Magazine Trio. 12 February. <http://www.fijitimes.com/story.aspx?id=434233>

Government of Fiji. 2018. Report of the Suva Expert Dialogue: Loss and Damage Associated with Climate Change Impacts. Suva, August. <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/010818%20REPORT%20OF%20THE%20SUVA%20EXPERT%20DIALOGUE.pdf>

Hacquemand, Eric. 2018. En Nouvelle-Calédonie, la méthode Macron à l'œuvre. *Paris Match*, 10 May.

Heine, Hilda. 2018. Speech by Dr. Hilda C. Heine, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. 73rd session, UN General Assembly, New York, 25 September.

Houenipwela, Rick. 2018. Speech by Ricky Nelson Houenipwela, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands. 73rd session, UN General Assembly, New York, 28 September.

IHRC, International Human Rights Clinic. 2018. The Treaty on the Prohibition of

- Nuclear Weapons and the Compact of Free Association Between the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the United States. Human Rights Program, Harvard Law School, June. http://hrp.law.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/TPNW_Compact_Marshall_Islands_US.pdf
- IPCC, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. 2018. Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5°C. Incheon, Korea, 8 October. <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>
- Jetñil-Kijiner, Kathy. 2018. Anointed—By Dan Lin and Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner. YouTube, 15 April. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_isgBtJfPzU
- JSCT, Joint Standing Committee on Treaties. 2018. Report on PACER-Plus. Canberra: Parliament of Australia. Available from https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Treaties/PACERPlus-Agreement/Report_179
- Jubilee. 2018. Growing Bougainville's Future. Sydney: Jubilee Australia Research Centre. https://bougainvillemews.files.wordpress.com/2018/09/growing-bougainvillesfuture_120918.pdf
- Kant, Romitesh, Jason Titifanue, Jope Tarai, and Glenn Finau. 2018. Internet under Threat? The Politics of Online Censorship in the Pacific Islands. *Pacific Journalism Review* (2), 64–83. <https://ojs.aut.ac.nz/pacific-journalism-review/article/view/444/614>
- Kautoke-Holani, Alisi. 2018. Labor Mobility in the PACER Plus. *Asia & The Pacific Policy Studies* 5 (1), 90–101. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/app5.221/full>
- Leckie, Jackie. 2018. *A University for the Pacific—50 Years of USP*. Suva: USP 50th Anniversary Committee. Available from <http://fliphtml5.com/bacdt/asgl/basic>
- Ligaiula, Pita. 2018. PNA Member Nations to Claim Economic Zone. Pacnews, 10 December.
- Maclellan, Nic. 2018a. Chinese Walkout. Pacnews, 4 September.
- . 2018b. Forum Poses Climate and Security as Central Concerns. Pacnews, 5 September.
- . 2018c. France and the Blue Pacific. *Asia & The Pacific Policy Studies* 5 (3): 426–441. September. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/app5.228>
- . 2018d. The Island Making Everyone Crazy. Inside Story, 24 September. <https://insidestory.org.au/the-island-making-everyone-crazy/>
- . 2018e. Securing Maritime Boundaries, Pacnews, 4 September.
- . 2018f. Sedition and Pacific Media Freedom. The Interpreter, 25 May. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/sedition-and-pacific-media-freedom>
- . 2018g. Smaller Island States Stake Their Ground. Pacnews, 8 September.
- . 2018h. Think(tank)ing about China. *Islands Business*, May.
- . 2018i. Vanuatu Dismisses China Base Claim. *Islands Business*, May.
- . 2019. “We Lost on the Numbers, but for Us It’s a Victory”: New Caledonia’s 2018 Referendum on Self-Determination. *Journal of Pacific History* 54 (2):224–252.
- . forthcoming. Stable, Democratic and Western: China and French Colonialism in the Pacific. In *The China Alternative*, edited by Graeme Smith and Terence Wesley Smith. Canberra: ANU Press.
- Maclellan, Nic, and Anthony Regan. 2018. New Caledonia and Bougainville: Towards a New Political Status? Discussion Paper 2018/03. Acton, ACT:

The Australia National University. http://dpa.bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/2018-08/dpa_dp2018_3_new_caledonia_and_bougainville-towards_a_new_political_status_.pdf

Macron, Emmanuel. 2018. Remarks at Joint Press Conference with Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron. Kirribilli, Sydney, 2 May.

Malielegaoi, Tuilaepa Sialele. 2018. Speech by Tuilaepa Sialele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of Samoa. 73rd session, UN General Assembly, New York, 28 September.

Matsumoto, Fumi. 2018. A Small Island Gets Caught in China's Pacific Power Game with West. *Nikkei Asian Review*, 11 December.

MFAT, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. 2018. Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform. <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/environment/clean-energy-and-fossil-fuels/>

Morrison, Scott. 2018. Australia and the Pacific: A New Chapter. Speech by Prime Minister Scott Morrison. Lavarack Army Barracks, Townsville, Queensland, Australia, 8 November. <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/address-australia-and-pacific-new-chapter>

Murphy, Kathryn. 2018. Environment Minister Accused of Misleading House and Insulting Former Kiribati President. *Guardian*, 17 October. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/oct/17/environment-minister-accused-of-misleading-house-and-insulting-kiribati-president>

NRI, National Research Institute. 2018. Bougainville Referendum Research Project Papers, NRI, Port Moresby. <https://pngnri.org/index.php/hosted-programs-projects/bougainville-referendum-research-project>

NZ Government. 2018a. Auckland State-

ment on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Auckland, 5–7 December. <http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/akl-tpnw7dec18.pdf>

———. 2018b. Pacific Climate Change-Related Displacement and Migration: A New Zealand Action Plan, May. <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Redacted-Cabinet-Paper-Pacific-climate-migration-2-May-2018.pdf>

NZ Ministry of Defence. 2018a. The Climate Crisis: Defence Readiness and Responsibilities, November. <https://defence.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Climate-Change-and-Security-2018.pdf>

———. 2018b. Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018. <https://www.defence.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Strategic-Defence-Policy-Statement-2018.pdf>

PALM, Pacific Area Leaders Meeting. 2018. The Eighth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM8) Leaders Declaration. Iwaki, Fukushima, Japan, 18–19 May. http://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/ocn/page4e_000825.html

PIFS, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2011. *WWII Unexploded Ordnance: A Study of UXO in Four Pacific Countries*. Suva: Forum Regional Security Committee.

———. 2018a. Boe Declaration on Regional Security. Pacific Islands Forum, Nauru, September. <https://www.forumsec.org/boe-declaration-on-regional-security/>

———. 2018b. Final Communiqué. Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, Yaren, Nauru, September.

———. 2018c. Pacific Island Countries Demonstrate Leadership on Climate Finance. Media release, 7 December.

———. 2018d. Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General Welcomes New Director General of the Forum Fisheries Agency. Media release, 6 July.

———. 2018e. Summary of Decisions

- of the 28th Smaller Island States Leaders Meeting. Nauru, 3 September. <https://www.forumsec.org/summary-of-decisions-for-the-28th-smaller-islands-states-leaders-meeting/>
- PNA, Parties to the Nauru Agreement. 2018. Pacific Fisheries Leaders Highlight Tuna Commission Action. Media release, 14 December.
- Remengesau, Tommy. 2018. Speech by Tommy Esang Remengesau Jr., President of the Republic of Palau. 73rd session, UN General Assembly, New York, 26 September.
- Salwai, Charlot. 2018. Speech by Charlot Salwai Tabimasmass, Prime Minister of Vanuatu. 73rd session, UN General Assembly, New York, 27 September.
- Shorten, Bill. 2018. The Foreign Policy of the Next Labor Government. Speech to the Lowy Institute for International Policy, Sydney, 29 October. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/foreign-policy-next-labor-government>
- Sopoaga, Enele. 2018. Speech by Enele Sosene Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu. 73rd session, UN General Assembly, New York, 27 September.
- Tarai, Jope. 2018. Unpacking Fiji Internet Law Narratives: Online Safety or Online Regulation? *Pacific Journalism Review* 24 (2): 84–94. <https://ojs.aut.ac.nz/pacific-journalism-review/article/view/443/615>
- Volau, Nanise. 2018. Tonga's Dr Tupou-Roosen Is New FFA Boss. *Islands Business*, July.
- Waq, Baron. 2018. Speech by Baron Waq, President of the Republic of Nauru. 73rd session, UN General Assembly, New York, 26 September.
- Wong, Penny. 2018. Australian Foreign Policy—Future Asia and the Pacific. Speech to APEC Study Centre, Melbourne, 30 October. <https://www.pennywong.com.au/speeches/australian-foreign-policy-futureasia-and-the-pacific-apec-study-centre-melbourne/>
- World Bank. 2018. Maximizing the Development Impacts from Temporary Migration: Recommendations for Australia's Seasonal Worker Programme. March. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/572391522153097172/pdf/122270-repl-PUBLIC.pdf>
- Wroe, David. 2018a. China Casts Its Net Deep into the Pacific with \$2b Fish Farm. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 May.
- . 2018b. China Eyes Vanuatu Military Base in Plan with Global Ramifications. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 April
- . 2018c. Chinese Wharf in Vanuatu Raising Eyebrows across the Pacific. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 April.
- . 2018d. Vanuatu PM Defends China Deals but Vows to Oppose Any New Foreign Base. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 April
- Zhang, Denghua. 2018. China's Growing Interest in Deep Sea Mining in the Pacific. In Brief Paper 2018/11. Acton, ACT: The Australian National University. http://dpa.bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/2018-05/ib2018_11_zhang.pdf
- Zweifel, Walter. 2018. For 30 Years We Lied about the Nuclear Tests, Says Tahiti's Fritch. RNZ Pacific, 21 November. <https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/376391/for-30-years-we-lied-about-the-nuclear-tests-says-tahiti-s-fritch>